Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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PR 180845Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 629

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA TAGS: PINT, MY

SUBJ: SABAH DEVELOPMENTS

REF: KL 4170

1. ALL MORNING PAPERS JUL 17 REPORTED THAT HIGH LEVEL SABAH
GOVERNMENT DELEGATION HEADED BY ACTING CHIEF MINISTER (AND
AGRICULTURE/FISHERIES MINISTER) TAN SRI SAID KERUAK FLEW TO
PENANG JUL 16 TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER
TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN IN RESOLVING POLITICAL CRISIS RESULTING FROM
FORMATION OF NEW PARTY "BERJAYA" (REFTEL). ACCORDING PRESS
REPORTS, KERUAK, UNITED SABAH NATIONAL ORGANIZATION (USNO) AND
SABAH CHINESE ASSOCIATION (SCA) LEADERS APPEALED TO TUNKU AS
"FATHER OF MALAYSIAN INDEPENDENCE" TO HELP AVERT CONSTITUTIONAL
CRISIS AND TO PRESERVE USNO/SCA GOVERNMENT IN SABAH. RELIABLE
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PRESS SOURCE TOLD US THAT TUNKU SAID HE IS NO LONGER IN

POLITICS AND SUGGESTED THAT SABAH DELEGATION TALK TO POLITICAL LEADERS IN KUALA LUMPUR. TUNKU REPORTEDLY COUNSELED CALM AND PATIENCE IN RESOLVING POLITICAL CRISIS AND URGED DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER RAZAK. (NOTE: TUNKU WAS INTERMEDIARY IN TALKS WITH SABAH LEADERS IN LATE APRIL; SEE KL 3234.)

- 2. AFTERNOON DAILY "MALAY MAIL" JUL 17 SAID SECRET TALKS ARE UNDER WAY IN KOTA KINABALU BETWEEN USNO AND BERJAYA LEADERS WITH OBJECTIVE OF FORMING/COALITION GOVERNMENT. MUSTAPHA'S VOLUNTARY RESIGNATION IS PRINCIPAL BERJAYA CONDITION, ACCORDING TO BERJAYA TREASURER PETER MOJUNTIN. IN PRESS INTERVIEW IN KOTA KINABALU, MOJUNTIN SAID BERJAYA IS OVERWHELMEND WITH APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP AND THAT SCA WILL SOON DISSOLVE ITSELF TO JOIN BERJAYA. "MALA MAIL" ALSO SAID MUSTAPHA THIS MORNING JOINED OTHER SABAH GOVERNMENT LEADERS IN PENANG FOR MEETING WITH UNKU.
- 3. COMMENT: SITUATION IS STILL FLUID AND, AS NOTED IN REFTEL, PRIME MINISTER RAZAK AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT COMPLETELY REVEALED THIEIR HANDS. AN UNSO-BERJAYA COALITION GOVERNMENT WITHOUT MUSTAPHA IS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY, BUT POSITION THAT WILL BE TAKEN BY MUSTAPHA CANNOT BE PREDICTED. WE HAVE NOT HAD ANY REPORTS OF CIVIL DISTURBANCES OR DEMONSTRATIONS IN SABAH; ALL POLITICAL FACTIONS CONCERNED HAVE CALLED FOR PUBLIC CALM.

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